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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NAIROBI 002519

SIPDIS  
STATE FOR AF/E, AF/RSA AND A/S CARSON

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TAGS: PREL PGOV SO

SUBJECT: Somalia - TFG Tentatively Moves Forward with Galgaduud ASWJ

REF: NAIROBI 2421; NAIROBI 1909; NAIROBI 2032

CLASSIFIED BY: Robert Patterson, Counselor for Somalia Affairs, State Department, Somalia Unit; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

**¶11. (C)** Summary: The TFG appears to be tentatively moving forward on its relationship with the well-armed north Galgaduud faction of ASWJ following stepped up pressure from the international community and political opinion makers inside Somalia. The TFG in mid-December reportedly reached an agreement with representatives of the north Galgaduud/ ASWJ faction to provide financial support to the group in exchange for the groups loyalty to the TFG. Multiple contacts tell us, however, that some TFG leaders view the faction as an Ethiopian-backed Habr Gedir subclan threat and will probably be hesitant to sustainably implement the agreement. Most ASWJ factions appear, for now, relatively united (reftel a), despite potential clan and sectarian fault lines within the affiliation. We are urging the TFG to continue to shore up its relationship with the north Galgaduud/ASWJ faction. An emboldened ASWJ movement not connected to the TFG risks adding another contender to the conflict in Somalia. In addition, we are supporting non-armed ASWJ factions in their anti-Shabaab messaging efforts. End Summary.

**¶12. (C)** The TFG appears to be tentatively moving forward on its relationship with the well-armed Galgaduud faction of ASWJ following stepped up pressure from the international community and political opinion makers inside Somalia to reach out and broaden its support base. The TFG in mid-December reportedly reached an agreement with representatives of the north Galgaduud/ASWJ faction to provide financial support to the group in exchange for the groups loyalty to the TFG. Our contacts tell us Sheikh Sharif in mid-December exhibited strong leadership when he convinced deputy Prime Minister Sharif Hassan, long opposed to outreach to north Galgaduud, to go along with a plan for the TFG to provide support to the group. Our contacts tell us the TFG transferred 100,000USD to the north Galgaduud/ASWJ faction during the recent negotiations. We are working to run down how much of the reported money ultimately reached ASWJ forces on the ground. (Note: If true, this would signal political maturation and growing confidence on Sheikh Sharif's part. The TFG President since taking office last year has often allowed his deputy Prime Minister to undercut TFG outreach efforts. End note.)

**¶13. (C)** Multiple contacts tell us that some within the TFG view the north Galgaduud ASWJ faction as an Ethiopian-backed Habr Gedir subclan threat and will probably remain hesitant to sustainably implement any agreement. (Note: We think the TFG will be inclined, for the sake of appearances and due to internal disagreements

within the TFG, to give minimal support to the north Galgaduud/ASWJ faction and then back away from the group. The TFG since the original June TFG-ASWJ agreement has repeatedly missed opportunities to shore up its relationship with the north Galgaduud/ASWJ faction, choosing instead to provide support only to ASWJ members from Sheikh Sharif's subclan and/or meet with ASWJ clerics who have little military influence on the ground (reftel b). End Note.) Other contacts, however, opine that Sheikh Sharif may have had a change of heart, believing it is better to shore up the TFG's relationship with the north Galgaduud/ASWJ faction than see the group grow even closer to Ethiopia.

¶4. (C) Former TFG deputy Prime Minister and current political opinion maker Ahmed Abdisalem in mid-December told Somalia Unit PolOff that he, other political leaders, Somali civil society, and clan leaders were working to convince Sheikh Sharif to move forward on outreach efforts and to make political changes inside the TFG that would mitigate Sharif Hassan's ability to undercut TFG outreach while still keeping Hassan inside the TFG. (Note: We think Abdisalem, a close contact of Sheikh Sharif, is an astute political operative in Somalia. Personally ambitious, Abdisalem often demonstrates a rare strategic vision of the TFG's challenges and opportunities. Abdisalem hails from the Ayr subclan and was an important player in bringing the TFG and ARS-Djibouti together during the Djibouti process. End note.)

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¶5. (C) Most ASWJ factions appear, for now, relatively united (reftel a), despite potential clan and sectarian fault lines within the affiliation (reftel a). (Note: ASWJ in much of Somalia exists only as a system of shared spiritual principles. The north Galgaduud/ASWJ faction has been the most militarily active of the ASWJ factions. End note.) During December conversations with the Somalia Unit, representatives from various geographical and sectarian factions of ASWJ said they would support the TFG moving closer to the north Galgaduud faction. Furthermore, while there are internal ASWJ debates over who is sanctioned to negotiate ASWJ agreements with the TFG, few ASWJ members appear prepared to condemn the resulting agreements. In addition, many ASWJ factions appear willing to cede the importance of the north Galgaduud faction's role in fighting al-Shabaab and creating greater cooperation between local fighters in north Galgaduud, Hiraan, and Gedo (reftel c).

¶6. (C) Comment: We are urging the TFG to follow through with the north Galgaduud faction. An emboldened ASWJ movement not connected to the TFG risks adding another contender to the conflict in Somalia. In addition, we are supporting other non-armed ASWJ factions in their anti-Shabaab messaging efforts. We think this is a low cost way to support organic efforts to counter al-Shabaab propaganda and encourage various ASWJ factions to remain supportive, rather than resentful, of any would-be TFG support to the north Galgaduud/ASWJ faction.  
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